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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA  
LAFAYETTE DIVISION

U. S. DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA  
FILED

JUN 10 2002

ROBERT H. SHENNEL CLERK  
BY SPG DEPUTY

ALFREDA TRAHAN, *et al*,

And

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
Plaintiffs,

\* CIVIL CASE NUMBER: 10903

\*

VERSUS

\*

JUDGE HAIK

\*

LAFAYETTE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD,  
*et al*

Defendants

\*\*\*\*\*

MODIFICATION PLAN

The following Modification Plan for the Lafayette Parish School District is ordered by the court based upon substantial input among the parties to this lawsuit and substantial agreement among the parties with a Plan submitted to the court, as per the court's Order, by Superintendent James Easton of the Lafayette Parish School System. After reviewing the submissions by all of the parties, and considering those submissions as well as the law applicable hereto, and keeping in mind the court's prior Orders in this matter regarding assignment of teachers and administrators.

INTRODUCTION

The Lafayette Parish School System will implement a "Schools of Choice" program, which will include programmatic changes and theme schools throughout the system. The program will be promoted in such a way that students and parents understand the choices, are encouraged to make choices, and will be assisted in the implementation of the Schools of Choice Program. The new J. Wallace James Elementary School will open in August 2002, as major expansion of the

200

Schools of Choice offerings in Lafayette Parish. The focus of James Elementary will be arts and technology. This will enable the system to draw, not only from the closed sites of St. Antoine Elementary and the former J. W. James Elementary, but from throughout the entire parish. In this way, the multiple goals of high quality education as well as cultural and racial diversity will be served.

Additional provisions are made in this Plan to further desegregate the system without resorting to districtwide rezoning for student attendance, and to enhance the districtwide evaluation and reporting requirements.

#### **I. Currently Offered Programs**

The following Schools of Choice programs that are currently offered to students from throughout the district:

##### **French Immersion:**

Evangeline Elementary  
S. J. Montgomery Elementary  
Myrtle Place Elementary  
Paul Breaux Middle  
Prairie Elementary  
Vermilion Elementary

##### **Arts Academy:**

L. J. Alleman Middle  
N. P. Moss Annex (high school)

##### **Engineering Academy:**

Northside High

##### **Jewelry Academy:**

Ovey Comeaux High

Pursuant to this Plan, the following changes will be made:

## **II. J. Wallace James Elementary School - Arts and Technology**

This is a newly constructed school located on Willow Street. Students displaced from the two closed schools, St. Antoine and J. W. James Schools, will have first priority in choosing to attend the new J. W. James Elementary School for Arts and Technology. They will also have the priority to remain at the schools they presently attend (S. J. Montgomery, Prairie, Ossun, and Woodavle/L.J. Alleman Schools). To further desegregate the district, the "Interdistrict Choice" in combination with the "Controlled Choice" options for Schools of Choice will be utilized.

Arts courses such as drama, dance and music will be offered along with the latest technology courses. Physical accommodations will be made to insure that dance and art studios and vocal and instrumental music rooms are available in the new school in order to promote the programs offered.

Upon the successful completion of the program at the new J. W. James School, if a student desires to continue with the arts program at the middle school level, such student will be assured placement. This will provide the first continual choice program in the district. Those choosing not to continue in the arts curriculum at the middle school level will return to their home zone middle school, or can apply to another school of choice.

### **A. Early Registration Procedures**

1. Students displaced from the two closed schools, St. Antoine and J. W. James, will be allowed priority choice for entrance into the new J. W. James School, and will also be advised by the Lafayette Parish School Board through direct mailing, and other media announcements, that they may remain at the schools they presently attend.

2. Mailouts, as well as all other means of mass communication including, television, radio, newspaper, which will outline the program, registration procedures and deadlines, will be used to notify the parents of the displaced students of all of the potential choices available to them for enrollment.
3. Off-site neighborhood based registration centers will be made available to the parents.
4. An open-house will be offered once construction of the school has been completed.
5. Students who move into the J. Wallace James Elementary School attendance zone after July 15, 2002 will attend that school, unless accepted into a different school of choice. The attendance zone for students residing in tracts 8-A, 8-C, 2-A, 11-A, 9-B is the J. Wallace James Elementary School.

**B. Displaced Students** (From former J. W. James & St. Antoine Elementary Schools)

1. Displaced students can elect to remain at their receiving school designated in the July 2000 Consent Decree.
2. Displaced students can elect to attend J. Wallace James Elementary School.
3. May 1, 2002 through July 15, 2002 is the registration period for parents of displaced students to make the selection between B-1 and B-2 above. Extenuating circumstances may be considered for extension of this registration period. This is a one-time exercisable option.
4. Siblings of displaced students are grandfathered in.

**III. L. J. Alleman Middle School - Arts Academy and  
Edgar Martin Middle School - ESL**

In order to make classroom space available at L. J. Alleman Middle School, the “English as a Second Language” (ESL) program, will be moved to Edgar Martin Middle School beginning with the 2003-2004 school year. The ESL program currently serves approximately seventy-five Hispanic, African, and Asian students. Elementary ESL students currently attend Broadmoor Elementary for grades K through 4. Non-ESL students attending Broadmoor Elementary feed into the Edgar Martin Middle School. It would therefore be a natural transition for ESL students to follow their peers.

Moving this population to E. Martin Middle will change the current enrollment of 84% majority/16% minority to 76% majority/24% minority. This move will increase the minority students at Edgar Martin Middle School, bringing this school into compliance. It will also free three classrooms at L. J. Alleman Middle School, to accommodate students graduating from J. W. James Arts and Technology School who wish to continue in the arts program at the middle school level.

**IV. Truman Elementary - Pre-K**

This school site will become the parish’s first Montessori School serving pre-kindergarten students from current Lafayette Parish School System programs for four-year olds.

Students displaced by the change in mission of Truman Elementary are reassigned as follows:

- A. Current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students from Truman will attend the middle schools to which they are currently targeted. The grade configuration of Alice Boucher and J. W.

Faulk will be changed to Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. N. P. Moss Middle will be changed to 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Boucher and Faulk Elementary Schools are feeder schools to N. P. Moss Middle. This change results in students entering N. P. Moss one year sooner than under the previous plan. This change will allow better utilization of Moss' new enlarged middle school facility by adding 211 students - 37 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Truman, 93 5<sup>th</sup> graders from J. W. Faulk and 81 5<sup>th</sup> graders from Alice Boucher. It also increases Moss' population from 587 to 798. The racial makeup of these schools will not be affected by this change.

B. Current students in the K through 4<sup>th</sup> Grades, will be reassigned as follows:

1. Students residing in Tracts 07A and 09A will attend Ossun Elementary. This will change the racial makeup of this school from 59% white and 41% minority to 55% white and 45% minority.
2. Students residing in Tract 11C will attend Alice Boucher. The racial makeup of this school will not change.
3. Tract 02A, 11A and 09B will attend the new J. W. James Elementary, except that for the transition year 2002-2003, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in those tracts will be assigned to N. P. Moss Middle. (This will eliminate the necessity of those children being moved to J. W. James for 5<sup>th</sup> grade, then moved again in 6<sup>th</sup> grade to N. P. Moss.) Through the use of "Interdistrict Choice" and "Controlled Choice," the racial makeup of the new school will follow court approved ratios.

4. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at J. W. Faulk Elementary, Alice Boucher Elementary, and 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Tracts 11C, 02A, and 11A, formerly of Truman Elementary, will attend N. P. Moss Middle School. (5<sup>th</sup> grade students in Tracts 11C, 02A, and 11A will only attend N. P. Moss for the year 2002-2003. Afterward, all K-5 grade students in those tracts will attend J. W. James.)

**V. Alice Boucher and J. W. Faulk Elementary Schools**

The decrease in student population at J. W. Faulk created by the reassignment of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to N. P. Moss Middle, will be offset by returning students living in the area bordered by Louisiana Avenue, Moss Street, Willow Street, and East Alexander Street (approximately 100 students, 90 black, 9 white) to J. W. Faulk Elementary. Those students were originally zoned for Faulk but moved to Alice Boucher during the 2000-2001 school year.

**VI. Vermilion Elementary**

Vermilion Elementary School will become a pilot school beginning in the school year 2002-2003 through 2003-2004. At the end of that period, an evaluation will be conducted to see if substantial achievement gains have been made in accordance with the State Accountability Model. Adequate resources will be provided as needed to give the school every opportunity to succeed, these resources to be concentrated away from any capital improvements, pending the outcome of the pilot program. Periodic assessments will be made and reported to the Board each semester.

**VII. Ridge Elementary**

Students from the Jackson Square complex currently attending Charles Burke Elementary will be moved to Ridge Elementary. Students living in this area previously attended Ridge and

would return to a school with which they are familiar. This move will change the enrollment statistics at Ridge from 79% majority and 21% minority to 70% majority / 30% minority.

#### **VIII. Additional Schools of Choice**

Through the use of the "Schools of Choice" program, the Lafayette Parish School System will enable parents and families throughout the district to choose programs that will best fit the needs of their children and at the same time, utilize methods that will further desegregate the system. The following programs will be instituted pursuant to the Schools of Choice Program:

**Evangeline Elementary - Mathematics and Technology**

**Alice Boucher Elementary - Spanish Immersion, beginning school year 2003-2004**

**Lafayette Middle School - Oil, Gas, and Petroleum (Math and Science)**

**N. P. Moss Middle - Mathematics and Technology**

**- Arts Academy, beginning year 2003-2004**

**Plantation Elementary School - Science and Technology**

#### **IX. Majority to Minority Transfers**

Any student whose race is in the majority at the school to which he or she is assigned, may elect to transfer to any school at which the student's race is in the minority. For example, a white student who attends a majority white school may elect to attend any school which is a majority African-American school. An African-American student who attends a majority African-American school, may elect to attend a majority white school. Transportation is provided to facilitate majority to minority transfers. The Lafayette Parish School Board will use all reasonable means to advise the public of this transfer option, to include print and electronic media, handouts at schools and public service announcements as well as school assemblies.



The Lafayette Parish School System will continue to utilize the majority to minority transfer in order to allow students to attend schools other than those in which they are currently zoned. Applications for students to choose this option must be submitted by July 31 of each school year.

Nothing in this Consent Decree shall limit the parent of any child who is eligible for a majority to minority transfer from applying for such a transfer.

**X. Annual Evaluation of Use of Facilities and Student Populations**

An administrator shall be charged with analyzing the use of facilities and student populations at each school. This administrator would be responsible for gathering and researching data, analyzing the collected data, and making a report of recommendations to the Superintendent. A report reflecting the data collected, analysis and recommendations will be submitted annually with the October Hinds County Report.

**XI. Application for Schools of Choice**

Nothing in this Consent Decree shall prohibit a parent from applying to any "Schools of Choice" as defined in the Introduction to this Joint Modification Plan.

**XII. Maps**

The attendance zone modifications outlined above are incorporated in the two attached maps, entitled "Lafayette Parish School System Proposed Attendance Zones for 2002-2003, Middle School Zones Changes Parish Map," (Exhibit 1) and "Lafayette Parish School System Proposed Attendance Zones for 2002-2003, Elementary School Zones Changes Parish Map" (Exhibit 2). Written boundary descriptions are attached to each map. (\*\*\*\*Obtain from System)

**XIII. Class Sizes**

Teacher - pupil ratios will be established at 15 to 1 at low performing schools, the level at

which substantial educational research guarantees significant improvement in student performance, especially for "at risk" minority students. K-5 class sizes for "at risk" students will be capped at 18. In other words, if a class exceeds 18 students, another teacher will be provided.

**XIV. Consistent Programing for "At Risk" Students**

The district will adopt a standardized curriculum with all appropriate enrichment parishwide for "at risk", children, particularly for K-3.

**XV. INCENTIVE PAY**

The Board approves and endorses the concept of incentive pay for teachers and administrators who volunteer to work in "at risk," situations. The Board authorizes its staff to make specific recommendations for implementation parish wide of an incentive pay plan with immediate emphasis on low performing schools.

**XVI. Professional Development**

Additional staff development will be provided for teachers and administrators in "at risk" situations. Specifically, diversity and sensitivity training will be required.

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2002.

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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE**

RECEIVED

JUN 10 2002

ROBERT H. SHEMWELL, CLERK  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA  
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June 10, 2002

Ms. Catherine B. Carter  
Clerk of Court  
United States District Court  
Western District of Louisiana  
Lafayette-Opelousas Division  
800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2100  
Lafayette, LA 70501

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

Re: Alfreda Trahan, et al  
Vs: Lafayette Parish School Board  
No: 10903 / U.S.D.C. / Lafayette-Opelousas Division  
Our File: 4115-9664

Dear Ms. Carter:

I enclose for filing in this matter a Modification Plan which I ask that you file per order of Judge Haik. I send to all counsel a copy and advise all that paragraph 5 on page 7 has been deleted per the judge's request.

If there are any questions, please telephone me.

With best regards, I am

Yours very truly,

PREIS, KRAFT & ROY

L. LANE ROY

LLR/jto  
Enclosure

**PREIS, KRAFT & ROY**

Ms. Catherine B. Carter

Clerk of Court

June 10, 2002

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cc: Judge Richard T. Haik (via hand delivery)  
Lloyd Dangerfield (via fax)  
Dennis D. Parker (via fax)  
Janice E. Hebert (via fax)  
Evanjerl Dorris (via fax)  
Supt. James Easton (via fax)